
**Early Learning & Children's Services
Committee**

HB 2107

Brief Description: Regarding the delivery of early learning home visitation programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Kagi, Roberts, Kessler, Kenney and Santos.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Transfers the administration of home visitation programs from the Council for Children and Families to the Department of Early Learning.

Hearing Date: 2/19/09

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120)

Background:

Home visitation programs deliver services in the home to parents and children and aim to alleviate the effects various family risk factors have on child development. Home visitation programs share a focus on the importance of children's early years, the pivotal role parents play in shaping children's lives, and the belief that one of the best ways to reach families with young children is by bringing the services to them, rather than expecting those families to seek assistance in the community. Offering the services in the home eliminates barriers such as transportation and time and provides a more personalized experience by allowing families to interact in a comfortable and natural environment. Rigorous research provides significant evidence of the effectiveness of home visitation programs as an early intervention strategy.

In 1982 the Legislature created the Washington Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (WCPCAN) to promote prevention of child abuse and neglect, and to encourage and support effective community prevention efforts. The WCPCAN is a Governor-appointed council, that in 2008, was renamed the Council for Children and Families (CCF). The

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Governor's proposed budget released December 18, 2008, for the next biennium does not include the CCF.

The evidence-based home visitation programs currently operating with CCF grants across the state include:

- Nurse Family Partnership;
- Healthy Families New York;
- Home Instruction for Parents of Pre-School Youngsters;
- Parents As Teachers;
- Parent-Child Home Program; and
- Project SafeCare.

Summary of Bill:

The administration of home visitation programs is transferred from the Council for Children and Families to the Department of Early Learning. Legislative findings are established regarding the potential for evidence-based home visitation programs to positively influence early brain development during infancy, toddlerhood, and beyond by supporting parents in families with proven risk factors for poor child outcomes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.